



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

KAZAKHSTAN



- Kazakhstani businesses have saved \$530 million a year since 2010 thanks to USAID-assisted reforms that remove excessive requirements on business operations.
- USAID developed a simplified customs system for Kazakhstan that saves time and money at cargo transit points and enhances trade corridors between Central and South Asia.
- USAID helped create a parliamentary working group involving civil society and government, institutionalizing collaboration around social contracting in health care.

Photo credit: AKGO

Country Profile

Kazakhstan has enjoyed steady growth over the past decade, largely fueled by the development of its oil and gas resources. However, Kazakhstan continues to face a number of development challenges that constrain progress. The United States partners with Kazakhstan to support the country's emergence as a regional leader, contributing to peace, stability and prosperity within the region and beyond.

USAID partners with the government, private sector and people of Kazakhstan to enhance economic diversification, encourage democratic reforms, improve health services, prevent tuberculosis and HIV, and reduce carbon emissions. As part of the USAID Mission to Central Asia, USAID in Kazakhstan participates in a range of regional programming, including the U.S. Government's New Silk Road initiative, which increases regional connections between the economies and peoples of South and Central Asia — including Afghanistan — to foster greater stability and prosperity across the region.

OUR WORK

Measuring four times the size of Texas and sharing lengthy borders with China and Russia, Kazakhstan is the world's largest landlocked country. Since Kazakhstan gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, its economy has grown to be the largest in Central Asia.

However, Kazakhstan continues to struggle with a variety of economic challenges that have their roots in the Soviet era, including a regulatory system that impedes business growth, limited media activity, low civic participation in governance, and a costly and ineffective medical system. About 25 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and there are substantial economic disparities between urban and rural areas and between geographic regions. Kazakhstan's economy produces significant greenhouse gas emissions — with 87 percent of its emissions coming from the energy sector — due to its heavy dependence on fossil fuel extraction and coal-based electricity generation.

In order to address these challenges, USAID works with the Government of Kazakhstan to enhance prosperity and security by expanding diverse and competitive trade, promoting regional cooperation on shared energy and water resources, and fostering inclusive governance institutions that respond to citizens' needs.

HEALTH

USAID has assisted Kazakhstan in making its health system financially viable and capable of providing quality care. USAID supported the country's first family medicine centers and introduced international practices that have improved maternal, child and reproductive health service delivery. USAID also partners with the Government of Kazakhstan to improve the implementation of prevention, care and treatment services for infectious diseases like HIV, tuberculosis and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB). Since 2010, USAID has supported HIV prevention programs and provided linkages to health care services for over 27,000 most at-risk people. USAID also introduced GeneXpert rapid diagnostic testing that provides a diagnosis for MDR TB in hours instead of weeks. USAID supports local health departments as they transition to provisioning TB patients with outpatient treatment, which plays an important role in preventing transmission.

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE

With USAID's support, Kazakhstan has developed a community of civil society organizations that provide critical services to the population, advocate for constituent rights and engage on key policy reform issues. Kazakhstan has also benefited from USAID support in institutionalizing the region's largest program of government financing for non-governmental organizations through state social procurement. Current USAID initiatives include counter-trafficking in persons, support to human rights defenders and improving the overall legal environment in which non-governmental organizations operate. To enhance the public's access to information, USAID supports the efforts of Kazakhstan's media outlets to produce and broadcast social, political and economic information relevant to local audiences. To improve efficiency, transparency and public trust in the court system, USAID assists the Supreme Court in implementing its strategic plan — especially aspects related to managerial and administrative capacity, including quality of judicial decisions and standard operating procedures.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TRADE

USAID works to support small- and medium-sized enterprises, streamline the legal and regulatory conditions for trade, expand access to business information, strengthen public sector budget and audit processes, increase banking sector oversight, and support Kazakhstani efforts to join the World Trade Organization. These programs help Kazakhstani businesses establish connections with U.S. companies as well as with markets in Central Asia, South Asia and beyond. USAID helps to strengthen Kazakhstan's green energy policies, improve energy efficiency, increase the supply of renewable energy and address climate change concerns by increasing the climate resiliency of the wheat sector. As the world's seventh largest wheat exporter, climate related reductions in Kazakhstan's wheat production would have significant repercussions for regional food security. Signaling our strong bilateral partnership, USAID's economic reform programs have been co-funded since 2006 by the Government of Kazakhstan. Along with other donors, USAID is sharing its experience with Kazakhstan as it moves to establish its own development agency, provisionally titled KazAID.

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USAID is helping to diversify Kazakhstan's economy. Here, an entrepreneur from Temirtau pitches her business plan. Photo credit: Pyxera Global



USAID pioneered the use of GeneXpert tuberculosis testing systems, decreasing the time required for an accurate diagnosis. Photo credit: USAID